

Graduation Plan

Master of Science Architecture, Urbanism & Building Sciences



Graduation Plan: All tracks

Submit your Graduation Plan to the Board of Examiners (Examencommissie-BK@tudelft.nl), Mentors and Delegate of the Board of Examiners one week before P2 at the latest.

The graduation plan consists of at least the following data/segments:

Personal information	
Name	Luis Druschke
Student number	5603730

Studio		
Name / Theme	Transient Liquidities along the New Silk Road II	
Main mentor	Marc Schoonderbeek	BK Architecture – Program Director Borders & Territories
Second mentor	Pierre Jennen	BK Architecture – Architectural Engineering
Argumentation of choice of the studio	<p>The reasons for choosing the Borders & Territories graduation studio are manifold. First and foremost, I embrace the approach that the design is strongly informed by research on a matter of personal interest. I am convinced that developing a thematic frame and taking a strong position upon contemporary discourses of the discipline supports the development towards a critical, independent, and reflective practitioner. Furthermore, I am intrigued by the experimental approach taught at the Borders & Territories chair. Distancing from conventional design procedures and representational techniques, the studio induces and demands creative thought processes that allow me to deal with the increasing social, political and environmental complexities.</p>	

Graduation project	
Title of the graduation project	Creation through Destruction – An alternative reality of productive catastrophes
Goal	
Location:	Gaziköy, Tekirdag, Turkey
The posed problem,	This investigation stems from a fascination with a new reality in which human and nature coexist. The project renegotiates the agency of nature by

challenging the anthropocentric understanding of a catastrophe and engaging with natural forces that shape our landscape.

In the larger thematic frame of climate emergency, it is necessary to understand the intrinsic destructive nature of architectural interventions. "Every building is a gaping hole of material ripped out of the earth. (...) Every building is a giant exhale of CO₂."¹ However, this project does not reside in postulating the negative environmental effects of material accumulations. Instead, it departs from an intrinsic destructive condition of creation. Therefore, the project contemplates the complexities and interdependencies of creation and destruction to engage creatively with the anthropocentric notion of a catastrophe. Introducing the clear aim of the project, the primal premise of this proposal becomes apparent: To what extent is destruction a necessary condition for creation? Are creation and destruction two separate entities or are the mutually dependent and merely expressed in different ways?

To apply this theoretical construct, the specific site conditions of the area under investigation that is strongly influenced by seismic activity of the North Anatolian Fault Line are taken as an instance. Here, the earthquake must not be understood as a single catastrophic event, but the logical consequence of the interdependencies of the system of moving tectonic plates and the accumulation and release of pressure.

	<p>Thus, the catastrophic nature of this event is challenged, and the earthquake becomes merely one potential act of how landscape is influenced by tectonic forces. The project situates itself then in an area that is strongly shaped by seismic activity, namely the western coast area of Marmara Sea in proximity to the city of Gaziköy. Here, the transient nature of landscape that is in constant reconfiguration is strongly tangible. The different processes of space making in nature such as landslides, erosion and sedimentation are largely conceived unfavorable, sometimes catastrophic. The site intervention engages with these changing ground conditions, reacts and alters these inputs to transcend their destructive character.</p> <p>The project aims at inducing a paradigm shift in which human and nature coexist. In this new reality, the notion of catastrophes become obsolete. Catastrophes only exist when humans elevate themselves to a sublime position. Hence, the project situates itself in this new reality, confronting the anthropocentric idea of nature and revealing the productive dimension of so-called catastrophic events.</p> <p>¹ Bratishenko, Malterre-Barthes. "How to: do no harm." <i>CCA</i>. accessed November 19, 2022. https://www.cca.qc.ca/en/85366/how-to-do-no-harm.</p>
<p>research questions and</p>	<p>RQ: How can the anthropocentric notion of a catastrophe be renegotiated by an</p>

	<p>architectural intervention in a reality in which human and nature coexist?</p> <p>SQ: How can landslides, erosion and sedimentation, largely conceived as catastrophic, reveal their productive dimension and thus confront the unilateral human-ground relationship?</p> <p>SQ: How can architectural interventions react to the transient nature of ground conditions that are rendered merely as structurally stable moments in a system 's evolution?</p>
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<p>design assignment in which these result.</p>	<p>The prospective design proposal conceives landscape as a cooperative agent and seeks to challenge the destructive nature of catastrophes. Deeply rooted in the specific site that is dominated by the pressure accumulation and release of the North Anatolian Fault Line and its subsequent landscape transformations, the project shall engage creatively with these changing conditions. Various processes that trigger spatial reconfigurations of the landscape shall be analyzed. Further, these inputs shall be sensed by a site intervention and produce a novel output. Instead of a mere sensing apparatus that tracks, measures and depicts the alterations of the ground, the design shall manipulate these changes triggered by catastrophes.</p>
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Process

<p>Method description</p> <p>The research and design approach of this graduation project resonates with the conceptual approach from the Borders & Territories studio. The initial research phase was carried out in a collective mapping effort which resulted in a first in-depth analysis of the given context. More specifically, different infrastructural systems,</p>

salient territorial conditions and socio-political phenomena have been dissected. Here, the agency of mapping has been negotiated in an attempt to transcend the mere representation of information and establish a post-representational concept that allows to critically engage with the physicalities and theorization of the given context. This mapping activity was accompanied by a theory seminar in which a personal interest was shaped by readings and analytical drawings towards a research topic for the graduation studio.

The following method concerned a site visit to the area of interest in Marmara Sea Region, Turkey. The topic of territorial formations along the North Anatolian Fault Line that had sparked my fascination relied heavily on an on-site investigation and documentation. The insights and impressions that have been feed by a local geologist from the Technical University of Istanbul in a semi-structured interview have been processed and analyzed by drawings.

The fourth method applied from the framework of the Borders & Territories graduation studio was a research paper that intended to ground the interest in contemporary social, political and environmental discourses of the discipline. Specifically, the paper dealt with the putative dialectic of catastrophes, namely the intrinsic creative condition of destruction. Finding precedents from fields of sociology, philosophy and architecture supported a further elaboration of the theoretical construct that can be conceived as the base of this graduation project.

The next method dealt with the transition from research to design. The translation of the theoretical concept into spatial expressions took place in the frame of the two weeks modeling workshop "Modi Operandi." The endeavor to scrutinize the physical specificities of the phenomena under investigation engendered first reflections on a potential project. Personally, the external agents of pressure and tension were introduced to represent and decipher the logics of territorial transformations.

The following steps towards the design proposal shall be carried out in an iterative process in which different methods of research and design shall be integrated to lead to the final version of the graduation project.

Firstly, different processes shall be analyzed of how the ground creates different spatial configurations such as sedimentation, erosion, and accumulations. Understanding and representing these catastrophes in drawings and models is fundamental to reveal the different characteristics the prospective intervention shall engage with. Here, the inquiry into drawing as a method shall gain importance. The ambition is to use drawings not solely for representational purposes, but as a tool to inform further design decisions. Therefore, the content of the drawing must be abstracted to become an independent source that can be reinterpreted. In that sense, it loses its representational character and has the potentiality to act between

the rational and the imaginative. This method shall support specifically the translation from site analysis to physical intervention.

Secondly, the extended function of the intervention shall be defined by contemplating the specific site conditions as well as the personal interpretation of the agency of nature and architecture. This shall be supported by a literature review. Considering its functionality, the input-output relationship between the transient ground conditions and the project shall be scrutinized. The intervention will function as a manipulator that senses the alterations of the ground and provokes a reaction towards these stimuli. Therefore, the latest research in geology that deals with the aforementioned phenomena shall be reviewed and different sensing apparatuses shall be analyzed in drawings. Next, the intervention shall be designed with a profound understanding of the processes of different catastrophes and in consideration of the intended manipulation that is performed by the intervention.

Literature and general practical preference

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- Allen, Stan. *Points + lines : diagrams and projects for the city*. (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2012).
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- Ghosn, Rania. Jazairy, El Hadi. *Geostories: Another Architecture for the Environment*. (New York: Actar, 2021).
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- Hurkxkens, Ilmar. *Of Crystals and Clouds*. (Rotterdam: OASE Foundation, 2022).
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- Kwinter, Sanford. *Landscapes of Change: Boccioni's "Stati d'animo" as a General Theory of Models*. (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992).
- Latour, Bruno. Weibel, Peter. *Critical Zones: The Science and Politics of Landing on Earth*. (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2020).
- Marinetti, Filippo Tommaso. *20th Century Art Futurist Manifestos: The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism*. (Art Press Books, 2013).
- Marot, Sebastien. *Palimpsestuous Ithaca*. (2013).
- Saraceno, Tomas. *ON AIR exhibition*. (2018).
- Vigano, Paola. Peleman, David. *The Project of the Soil*. (Rotterdam: OASE Foundation, 2022).
- Virilio, Paul. *Unknown Quantity*. (London: Thames & Hudson Ltd, 2003).
- Virilio, Paul. *The Museum of Accidents*. Art Press no. 102 (1986).

- Viollet-le-Duc, Eugene. *Le Massif du Mont Blanc*. (1870).
- Woods, Lebbeus. *Inhabiting the Quake*. (1995).
- Woods, Lebbeus. *The Fall*. in *Unknown Quantity*. (London: Thames & Hudson Ltd, 2003).
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Reflection

1. What is the relation between your graduation (project) topic, the studio topic (if applicable), your master track (A,U,BT,LA,MBE), and your master programme (MSc AUBS)?

The graduation project is developed from within the framework of the conceptual and theoretical scope of the Borders & Territories studio. Interpreting the fault line as a border that challenges the conception of inclusivity and exclusivity, this condition rather relates to a spatial continuum that affects its immediate context simultaneously. This project resides in the critical analysis of the relationship between architecture and its environmental context. The studio topic "Transient Liquidities along the New Silk Road" is in line with the project's approach to dissect the underlying territorial logics notably the specific ground conditions to engage with emergent spatial complexities. Furthermore, the project resonates with the studio's ambition to creatively rethink the agency of architecture to thematize phenomena that have been largely neglected.

The architecture master track at TU Delft is well-known for its integrated and symbiotic approach towards research and design. This master thesis strongly builds upon critical research to develop a project that eventually culminates in a physical site intervention. Hence, it combines the fundamental benefits of both practices. The graduation project can be conceived as the culmination of the previous acquired knowledge. As such, this project heavily relies on the most important ability that is taught in the TU Delft Architecture track namely, to critically reflect upon specific social, political and environmental conditions of the built and unbuilt environment.

This graduation project deals with the personal endeavor of envisioning a reality in which human and nature coexist. Challenging then the anthropocentric notion of a catastrophe and ultimately spatializing this concept necessitates a multi-disciplinary approach which is strongly encouraged and taught in the master program. A great support to the realization of this thesis is the remarkable diversity of potential directions and schools of thought. The diverse character of this program that finds expression in rich and engaging discussions as well as in the academic orientation are reasons for the project's realization.

2. What is the relevance of your graduation work in the larger social, professional and scientific framework.

The project aims at introducing a novel reality in which human and nature coexist to dismantle human's hegemony. In this scenario, the notion of a catastrophe becomes obsolete as it departs from a sublime human position. Therefore, the project challenges the anthropocentric and dichotomous perception of creation and destruction asking, what has been created by a catastrophe.

Commencing from this putative dialectic, the social relevance of the project primarily concerns the intrinsic destructive condition of creation – in other words, creation through destruction. It becomes pertinent to transcend the catastrophic aftermath of such an event and reveal its inherent complexities. Considering the ordinary use of the terms of catastrophe, disaster or accident, we could establish a common ground by referring to the unintentional and unpredictable nature of these events. Paul Virilio however mediates the accident in this theorization in a contrasting way claiming that “the accident is the hidden face of technical progress”.² With every invention, there is a concurrent creation of a new accident. Acknowledging the inevitable nature of these occurrences induces a paradigm shift in which the accident or the catastrophe is an intrinsic constituent of a system. Therefore, we advocate for transcending the pejorative connotations of these denotations to emphasize their fundamental relevance in the process of creation.

Looking at the project through the gaze of its architectural relevance, let us commence by introducing Sebastien Marot's concept of suburbanism that pleads for a different understanding of site and program, ground and intervention.³ He contextualizes his theory between contextualism in which the context dominates the programmatic use, in short – fuck content, and superurbanism where the site is located within the program – fuck context. In reference to this concept, the project advocates for an invention of the program out of the site. It is neither colored by its context, nor imposed onto a site. Instead, the specificities of the site are creatively interpreted to engage productively with catastrophes.

Situating architectural practice in the context of climate emergency, it is pertinent to call for a new human-ground relationship. Therefore, we must establish the following ground-conceptions. First, we must understand ground not as a stable underlay, but as a transient condition that is in constant reconfiguration. Second, we must not work against the forces of the ground and our environment but operate within their logic. Third, we must not conceive it as a unilateral relationship, but as reciprocal negotiations. Drawing on this novel understanding of the ground, the project

performs in collaboration with its immediate surrounding and conceives landscape as a cooperative machine.

The scientific relevance of the project is preoccupied with the transformative power of the imaginary. Envisioning a project that performs in-between art and science, rational and irrational and actual and fictional is a strong tool to engage with the contemporary problematic complexities and to foster counterintuitive thinking. The project's ambition to rethink our understanding of catastrophes to confront the unfavorable ground-relationship adds to the recent discourse of how we inhabit our planet, mainly thematized in social, philosophical, and architectural practices. Besides the thematic relevance of the project in the scientific sphere, it also investigates the process of drawing as a method. More specifically, it examines how the drawing can transcend its mere representational character and inform the physical expression of the site intervention. The drawing becomes here an autonomous source that needs to be reinterpreted after completion.

² Virilio, Paul. "The Museum of Accidents." in *Art Press* no. 102. 1986.

³ Marot, Sebastien. *Palimpsestuous Ithaca*. (2013).